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Congress of the United States
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Dear CBC Colleague:

I am writing to make you aware of a decision by the Federal Communications Commission that will have a devastating impact on the diversity of broadcast media in our communities and will particularly diminish the voices of minority broadcasters.

Both the Senate and the House attempted last year to prevent the FCC from approving new rules to allow for further media consolidation by further relaxing our nation's media ownership limits. Prior to the vote, many in Congress called on the FCC to first deal with the crisis in minority and female ownership of broadcast stations as well as the issue of localism before considering any rule changes.

Instead, the FCC approved sweeping new rules that place the future of minority and female ownership in greater jeopardy. People of color own just 3 percent of all TV stations. Meanwhile, the percentage of African American-owned TV stations declined by 60 percent from 2006 to 2007. African Americans own just 0.6 percent of all TV stations. In addition, recent studies have shown that people of color were less likely to own a broadcast station in more concentrated markets. This is simply unacceptable.

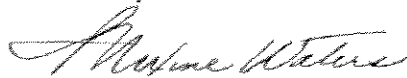
In addition, a Congressional Research Service report released last December found that the FCC should have studied the impact of lifting the cross-ownership rule on the entire market. An independent study using FCC data revealed that cross-ownership reduced the amount of news produced by competing stations in a local market. Simply put, non-cross-owned stations have a harder time competing against cross-owned outlets.

Finally, the FCC failed to conduct the ownership proceeding with complete transparency. The Commission granted five new permanent waivers for outlets owned by large media companies. Prior to the vote, the chairman never publicly disclosed his intention of granting the five waivers. But the FCC awarded more permanent waivers in one action that it did during the entire 30-year history of the cross-ownership ban.

The Senate passed a Resolution of Disapproval by a near unanimous vote in May. I urge you to support a Resolution of Disapproval (H.J. Res. 79) introduced by Rep. Jay Inslee (D-Wash.) and Rep. Dave Reichert (R-Wash.) that would overturn the Federal Communications Commission's decision to lift the 30-year ban on a company owning a newspaper and broadcast station in the same market.

I strongly urge you to support The Resolution of Disapproval which would invalidate the rule changes adopted by the FCC. Please join me in co-sponsoring H. J. Res. 79.

Sincerely,



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress